[Shri Annasaheb Shinde.]

after unloading. As far as the sheds are concerned, they have a storing capacity of about 16,000 to 17,000 tonnes. While the unloading rate is about 6,000 to 7,000 tonnes every day we transport almost 6,000 to 7,000 tonnes by road or rail. But assuming for the sake of argument that there is some delay involved or a day's quantity remains undespatched, even then there is no difficulty as far as storing of foodgrain is concerned.

DR. Z. A. AHMAD (Uttar Pradesh): I am glad to know that the hon'ble Minister has denied that there is a lot of wastage of foodgrains there. There is one aspect of the matter to which Mr. Kulkarni has drawn attention, that is, the unhygienic conditions that have been created due to some amount of grain rotting. I do not know whether the hon'ble Minister has taken note because in monsoons it is quite likely that grain starts rotting and things stink and stench all over and unhygienic conditions may be created in view of this. Will the hon'ble Minister take note of this fact and see to it that such unhygienic conditions are not allowed to be created?

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE: I think the hon'ble Member is right that due to heavy rains and because of crevices and gullies there some rotting does take place because of dust and soiled grains getting into it. But I must submit humbly that it is the responsibility of the port authorities to clean it. Because of that I submit, we have drawn the attention of the port authorities that the necessary hygienic conditions are there for the port workers to work.

श्री राजनारायण (उत्तर प्रदेश): मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि सरकार कोई ऐसी व्यवस्था क्यों नहीं बनाती है कि इस तरह से गल्ले का नुकसान न हो। क्या सरकार को इस बात की जानकारी है कि पार-साल भी मैंने इसी तरह से कहा था नैनी के बारे में कि वहां 50 हजार टन गल्ला सड़ रहा है और इस साल भी नैनी के बारे में हमने खाद्य मंत्री से शिकायत की थी कि नैनी में भी अब तक इसी तरह से गल्ला सड़ रहा है। यह आल इंडिया फूड कार्पोरेशन के चेयरमैन साहब जो हैं वे चले जाते हैं और घम

कर चले आते हैं। मैं नैनी, इलाहाबाद, के बारे में कह रहा हूं। वहां भी इस साल गल्ला सड़ा है। तो इसकी भी कोई जानकारी सरकार को इस समय देनी चाहिये थी कि जहां जहां गल्ला रखा है या जहां जहां वैगंस में गल्ला गया है वहां वहां गल्ले की ठीक से सम्हाल हो रही है या नहीं।

SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE: Madam, I would not like to go into all-India questions. That can be discussed by the hon'ble Member through proper channels. As far as Bombay docks are concerned, all necessary precautions are taken that there is minimum spoilage. And if there are any suggestions from any knowledgeable persons we shall be prepared to act upon them.

CLARIFICATION IN RELATION TO THE STATEMENT MADE BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY ON 5TH AUGUST, 1969, REGARDING THE STRIKE IN JUTE INDUSTRY

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The statement was made yesterday. Members may seek clarifications. Mr. Bhupesh Gupta.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): With regard to the statement, the hon'ble Minister has himself admitted earlier, and I think this is reflected here also that the demands of the jute mill workers are legitimate and just. This is a very important admission by the Government because the Government usually does not make such an admission.

Now, first of all, Madam Deputy Chairman, when I ask for clarifications I think the House should congratulate the jute mill workers in West Bengal for the very disciplined and peaceful manner in which they are conducting a hundred per cent. peaceful strike for the fulfilment of their legitimate demands which have been denied to them. In the last para of the statement I find that the hon'ble Minister has used rather philosophical terms when he says:—

"I am sure the House will wish to impress on all concerned the urgent need to place national interest above narrow points of view and express the hope that production which has been interrupted is resumed without any further loss of time."

This is a very, very wrong way of putting it. In fact, he should have explained who is responsible for the stoppage of production. The responsibility rests squarely on the shoulders of the Jute Mill Owners' Association. This is what he should have said. Nobody is to blame except the jute millowners as far as the two parties are concerned.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Put your question for clarification.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: That point should be made clear. Is it not a fact that important amongst the demands are : (1) wage increase, (2) bonus, security and permanency of service for the badli workers. There are other demands also. May I know, Madam, why the Government should not force the jute millowners to accept these demands which have been denied to the jute mill workers for several years now.

Again, Madam Deputy Chairman, I find in the statement even the industry says :-

"....I also gathered that the industry conceded that the workers' demands for some increase in the wage level were justified."

But having accepted that, they are trying to keep down the workers on the one hand and blackmail and pressurise the Government on the other by seeking such unrelated concessions from the Government on account of that. This is the position. Madam Deputy Chairman, I do not know exactly how to press this point. The Government-again and again say-cannot just pass over it in this manner. Also it must act. One way to act is to bring influence to bear upon the entire issue so that the jute mill owners are left with no other alternative but to accept the demand for a wage increase, bonus and permanency of badli and other workers. I would like to know from the Government what steps they are taking in this direction.

And before I sit down, once again I hope the House will share with me our deep sense of congratulations and happiness in the manner in which the jute mill workers of West Bengal, supported by the

United Front Government and the people, are fighting against the monopolists for social justice and for getting certain demands fulfilled which have been denied to them.

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT): Madam Deputy Chairman, the hon'ble Member wanted to know what the Central Government is doing. Even though the strike is on we are in constant touch with the parties concerned. This morning the delegation of the Jute Mills Association have met me and I have impressed upon them to accept my proposal for (a) that there should be an immediate raise in the wages, and (b) that the demands may be referred to an arbitration committee whose decision should be binding on all parties. I hope they are considering this matter and my colleague, the Labour Minister is in touch with the union leaders and they are also expected to come here tomorrow. We hope that some solution would be found.

SHRI BABUBHAI M. CHINAI (Maharashtra): Madam, I share the anxiety of my friend, Mr. Bhupesh Gupta and I heartily agree with the hon. Minister, Mr. Bhagat, for what he has said. I myself, as one of the employers' representative and being the President of the employers' organisation, feel that the jute workers' stand is not in the interest both of the industry and labour, and they should come to an understanding as suggested by Mr. Bhagat. I hope good sense will prevail upon them to come to some understanding in the interest of the country. So far as the demands are con-cerned, I think as far as possible, on the basis on which the hon. Minister has stated, they should be met, and the rest should be sent for arbitration.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is only a suggestion. Mr. Mohta.

SHRI M. K. MOHTA (Rajasthan): May I ask the hon. Minister whether it is not a fact that in recent months the jute industry has been incurring very fantastic losses, while on the other hand, the Central Government has been collecting as much as Rs. 45 crores in duties and taxes from this industry? I would like to know whether it is not a fact that the industry has been losing ground consistently in international markets, mostly to Pakistan.

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[Shri M. K. Mohta]

I would also like to know whether it is not a fact that the jute millowners have, in fact, agreed in principle to give immediate relief to the workmen provided they get some relief from the Government in this time of crisis and, if so, what is the reaction of the Government?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: I have explained that point in my statement.

SHRI C. D. PANDE (Uttar Pradesh): Madam, in view of the fact that the jute industry is suffering in exports and we are losing ground to Pakistan in all the monopoly industries which we have in our country, as far as exports are concerned, aggravate the this strike will further situation. May I urge upon the Government to see whether this is because of the producers or the recalcitrance of the employers or they are really not in a position to pay more? If they are not in a position to pay more, the Government should see how this problem can be solved. Otherwise, if they are not genuinely in a position to pay, you cannot, of course, force them. If they are in a position to pay, they must be made to pay.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This is only a suggestion. Have you got any answer?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: I have no comments.

SHRI C. D. PANDE: Madam, I wanted to know whether the industry is in a position to pay or not.

SHRIB. R. BHAGAT: I have said in my statement what can be done immediately. As far as the economic viability of the industry is concerned, it is a very viable industry, the largest exporter, employing a very large number of workers. The Tariff Commission is also looking into the cost structure and any rise in the wage level can be considered because the economic viability of the industry is also important. I have already said that in my statement.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR (Delhi): Madam, if the Government is so very well convinced about the justifiableness of the workers' demands, what stood in the way of the Government agreeing to consider the viability question of the industry,

particularly when you know that we are being pushed out of international markets? I would like, therefore, to know specifically what the industry owners demanded from the Government in the form of relief, how much that would mean in terms of loss of revenue and if there is any genuine difficulty to the industry, why the Government could not take that into account and avoid this tremendous national loss, to the tune of Rs. I crore a day, which has been caused by this strike.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: I have said what our view in this matter is. I said that view of this industry being put pushed out of the international market the strike situation will aggravate it. Therefore, we said that in order to avoid the strike, the workers' demand as regards in wages should be immediately accepted and then the other demands can be looked into quickly by an arbitration committee. That was one constructive suggestion we made, and we are still pursuing this. We hope that the industry will find its way to accept this suggestion. About the other things like the condition of the jute industry and so on, as I said, the Tariff Commission is already looking into it and when all the data and other facts are available, that can always be examined.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA (Uttar Pradesh): Madam, I congratulate the Minister for the stand that he has taken in the matter because the Minister has in clear terms said that there is a great deal of justification in the demands of the workers and that it is the recalcitrance of the employers, the Indian Jute Mills Association. which has led to a situation in which the strike was inevitable. In view of the fact that the Indian Jute Mills Association today is not as representative an organisation as it was two days back—the Bird Group which controls 11 jute mills, the Goenka Group and others have walked out of that Association-will the Minister change his tactics and rather than concentrating on negotiating with the Indian Jute Mills Association, will he begin to negotiate separately with the jute mills of Bengal? And for that purpose, if necessary, will he consider the advisability of paying a second, and this time a successful, visit Calcutta?

SHRI B. R BHAGAT: It is true, Madam, that a section of the jute mills

re inclined to accept the proposals gave. But the other section was more adamant. Now, as I said, a delegation of the Jute Mills Association—three people authorised by the Association—have come and they met me this morning, and I have urged upon them to accept this. I hope they would find their way to accept it. The workers' leaders may also come either this night or tomorrow and we may be able to find a solution.

Clarification re

SHRI GODEY MURAHARI (Uttar Pradesh): I would like to know from the Minister whether he would accept the principle of giving relief in Central duties to all industries where there are labour disputes. I ask this because the jute industry is now claiming that since the labour wants an increase in wages, there should be certain price support reliefs from the Government. If this principle is accepted, then wherever there is a labour dispute, the same demand will be made. Therefore, I would like to know whether the Government would categorically declare that unless the labour disputes are settled, questions about relief will not be considered by the Government. I would also like to know whether the Government would withdraw the recognition now accorded to the I.J.M.A. and sponsor a separate association.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: Madam, I have clearly said in my statement that the Government cannot accept that principle. The statement makes it absolutely clear. I have made it abundantly clear earlier also.

SHRI KALYAN ROY (West Bengal): Madam, is it not a fact that since 1957 the jute workers have not got a single naya paisa increase? Also, is it not a fact that this strike which began the day before yesterday, was to have taken place from July 15, 1968? The Labour Minister in the tripartite meeting at Delhi gave four suggestions—that the wage question should be left to a tripartite committee of three men; that the jute workers should get a night shift allowance; that dearness allowance will be revised for three months, instead of six months; and that the workers will get Rs. 24 at a time in view of the arrears due to correction in the cost of living index. All the jute millowners agreed to three points here. Later from Calcutta they wrote a letter to the Labour Minister saying that none of the suggestions was accepted. So, today the strike was the inevitable result of the consistently adamant attitude

of the jute mill owners not to give a single paisa's increase since 1957.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: Madam, no clarification is sought. But I may say that this is in the charter of demands of the workers and those demands still continue.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Uttar Pradesh): May I know from the honourable Minister whether the Government has examined the fact that the prices of jute are falling down everyday and the Jute Millowners' Association is earning more profits than what it was earning previously and in spite of that the jute millowners are obstinate enough not to accept the suggestions of the Government? Will the Government consider taking some powers from the Parliament to deal with such obstinate mill-owners or monopolists who are trying to hold the whole country to ransom?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: If the strike prolongs, certainly this can be thought of, but we hope that either today or tomorrow a way will be found and the strike will be called off.

SHRI S. R. VASAVADA (Gujarat): Madam, all efforts are being made by the Government, the two Ministers, to bring about a solution and let us hope that the matter will ultimately be settled either by negotiation or by arbitration. But in view of the fact that the entire national economy is affected, has the Government thought that if there is no settlement, say, in about 24 hours or 48 hours, the matter may be referred to a tribunal under the Industrial Disputes Act?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: Well, we will think of that eventuality if the matter is not settled in a day or two.

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS (Orissa): One days' closure of the jute mills in Bengal means our losing Rs. 75 lakhs in foreign exchange. In view of the differences amongst the jute mill-owners, may I know from the honourable Minister whether he will deal immediately directly with those owners who have already a better wage to the labourers so that the back-bone of this recalcitrant Association is broken? May I know from the honourable Minister whether he does not think that it amounts to intimidation on the

[Shri Banka Behary Das]

part of the Jute Mill-owners' Association to raise the question of export duty at this time when the demand of the workers for higher wages has been raised? In view of this, I want to know whether the Tariff Commission will be advised not to deal with the matter immediately unless the Jute Mill-owners' Association settles the question of wages of its labourers.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: As for the dissident elements who have not agreed with the Jute Mill-owners' Association, they are free to negotiate with the workers directly although their representatives have seen me. They can settle this matter with their labour unions directly. As I said, all the members of the Association have come here and they are at present in Delhi. And I have asked them to consider this question. As for the suggestion that the Tariff Commission should not look into it, that would not be a proper thing because it is going into the cost structure. If this strike continues, their functioning will also be automatically delayed because they cannot go into the mills and look into them.

PROF. SHANTILAL **KOTHARI** (Rajasthan): Whenever strikes took place in the past, the labourers were repressed, suppressed and put into the jail while the jute mill-owners, who are costing the country so much of foreign exchange which is the most important thing, never came to terms. Will the Government assure the House that it will deal with such owners as it has dealt in the past with those people who had broken the laws of the country? Will the Government agree to talk to them over this and ask for their balance-sheets for the last five years and also ask them whether they have ploughed back all the profits into the industry, and, if so, how much?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: If the strike continues it will be a serious threat to our economy and it will be a matter of grave urgency. And certainly we will have to think of what serious action we can take on it. As for looking into their profits and other things, the Tariff Commission is going into their cost structure and other things, and the question of ploughing back the profits and the amount of profitability also can be looked into by it. Normally also the Company Law Department goes into the question of intercorporate investments and other matters.

SHRI JOACHIM ALVA (Nominated) Madam, here is an extraordinary spectacle in the history of the Indian labour and industry when two hundred thousand labourers are pitted against a band of crorepatis and these labourers have been very peaceful and they have gone on an extraordinary strike where no violence has been resorted to. It is something very extraordinary and we must all take off our hats to the labourers in Calcutta. May I know if you are drawing up a white paper for the benefit of the House where you will list all profits made by these jute mill-owners for the last several years since independence? It is no use asking the Tariff Commission to draft it because the Tariff Commission makes all kinds of manipulations thereafter. I want you to lay the white paper before the House detailing the profits made by the jute mill-owners since independence. Forget about the British days when there were black mill-owners and white mill-owners. The jute mill-owners have made colossal, fantastic, profits. How? From the profits of the jute mill industry the Birlas purchased the Century Mills and they are now trying to go up for a Rs. 63 crore plant. Then we have got the Bangurs who have got into my constituency, Karwar, and got hold of a Rs. 64 crore plant, also textiles, and what not, in Jamnagar, in Saurashtra. Then we have got the Dalmia-Jains in southern Mysore right now. From where does the money come?

statement made by the Minister

Has the Minister gone and seen the tenements of the workers in Calcutta? Are they not entitled to decent tenements in Calcutta? Has the Minister gone round whether the labourers have and seen decent tenements? What does all this mean? All those big people who are responsible for this state of affairs should be detained under the Defence of India Rules. The Minister allows them to go round the world wasting a lot of foreign How does the Minister set exchange. right the conditions of these two hundred thousand labourers who will call a revolution tomorrow if we do not look after them. The Hindustan Housing Factory is not in Kerala. It is not in West Bengal. It is right under your nose in Delhi. You do not see the signs of the times. We are all Congressmen, but we do not see the signs of the times. Two hundred thousand labourers are pitted against a band of wealthy jute mill-owners who still want to.....(Interruptions) I want to know when you are going to bring about as ttlement. I want to know what profits the jute

mill-owners have made. There are the Birlas, the Goenkas, the Dalmia-Jains and what not. The banks have been kept open for them. And we are asking for

Clarification re.

Rs. 500 for the Members of Parliament. The State Bank of India is there. What guarantee have we got from it? should give a proper reply to all the. questions. Do not give a small reply.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: I am quite Calcutta. I have been familiar with going there since my childhood. I know tenements there and I know the workers. I am quite familiar with them. When we saw that a strike was going to take place, I appealed to their union leaders that they should be peaceful and they said they would be peaceful. I may compliment them that they have mainpeace and they have shown far tained greater responsibility to the community than anybody else, and they must be complimented for that.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What about the white paper? (Interruptions) Mr. Chitta Basu, your question should be a brief one.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal): I am very short, Madam. I am the briefest in my questions. I want to know from the honourable Minister whether he told the I.J.M.A. representatives that if they did not accept the proposals being made by him, then the Government would have no other alternative but to take over the management of the jute mills under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act. If the Minister has not told them so, will he kindly tell them so tomorrow that if they do not agree to settle the matter, then the Government will take action under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act and take over the management in view of the great loss which the industry is suffering?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: Since my talks with them this morning, it is my impression that they will accept my proposal.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: If not, are you going to tell them?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: think Mr. Mani will solve the problem

SHRI A. D. MANI (Madhya Pradesh): As I see the statement that the Minister has made on the subject, I find that he has offered very reasonable terms because 5-23 R.S./69.

the wages paid to the workers of the jute mill industry in Calcutta, about Rs. 142 per month, are pitifully low and this has led to the strike. May I ask the Minister whether if these proposals are not accepted to restore peace in the industry he would refer the matter to compulsory adjudication under the Industrial Disputes Act?

statement made

by the Minister

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: No. no.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Let him answer* My second point is this. We have heard this point in your budget debates. Excise duty on jute is a matter which requires very careful considertion. We do not want our competitiveness to be affected in foreign markets on account of the high rate of excise duty. Will he take up the matter with the Prime Minister who is in charge of the Ministry of Finance and ask her to apply her mind also to the question of a moderate reduction in the excise duty so that we may be competitive?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : He is talking like a jute mill-owner.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: As I said yesterday, we have been looking into the structure of the fiscal duties whether it is excise or anything else from time to time to see that the competitiveness of an export item like jute is maintained. That we always do but what I say is, we do not accept the principle of linking it with any demands of the workers.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA (Orissa): Even though the particular question is being replied to by the Minister for the past half an hour, I have not been able to understand one thing. Will the Minister be very specific in reply to one specific question? Is it or is it not a fact that the jute mills have been running at a loss for the last 2 years? I want the Minister's reply in the House because there is a lot of ambiguity in what is replied and what the Members who want to create a climate of chaos say. Therefore he must be specific whether it is not a fact that the jute industry has been undergoing a loss for the last 2 years.

AN HON. MEMBER: They are prepared to pay .

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: They may be prepared to pay even at the cost of liquidation of their own industry. I am not worried about it but let us know the facts. Fools are not always only in the

[Shri Lokanath Mishra]

They are elsewhere also but let me ask the question from the Minister whether he would be very specific and say whether in the last 2 years the jute industry has not been having a loss and, if so because of that, the industry whether has not lost the international market in favour of Pakistan? If that is so, what efforts have been made by the Minister to revive the international trade so that the jute industry can exist in this country and thereafter you can look after the workers there. Suppose the industry goes out of existence, what would the workers

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: Any computation or compilation of lossor profit is related to the cost structure. In the cost structure, the element of wages, raw material prices, management expenses and other charges as well as the prices are all involved. The Jute Commissioner has one set of figures about the cost structure with which the industry does not agree. It is for this reason that the Tariff Commission was asked to look into this and only when they go into this whole question and give us their opinion about this structure, we can know scientifically and specifically what is the position of the That is what is being jute industry. done.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT (Haryana): If the IJMA cannot collectively come to a decision, as the Minister himself has accepted, as some individual mills accept the justification of the demand of the workers, will the Government help in bringing those units together to come to a settlement at an early date so that the others are isolated?

Secondly, as Mr. Lokanath Misra said, the Government should not go into only the cost structure as stipulated by the jute mills but into the whole thing. If the Jute Commissioner says that the fluctuation of Rs. 400 on the shows a same day, it shows that such malpractices are going on in the jute industry. The whole thing should be gone into before a final decision is taken. Will the Government do that before coming to a final decision about the cost structure and the treatment they should give to the jute industry?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT: While the jute mills who were not agreeing with the Jute Mill Association may be prepared to negotiate with the workers, the workers as a whole may not be prepared to negotiate individually with individual unions

because what would happen to the other workers who will be left out? That difficulty is there. At this moment we are trying to bring about a solution of the problem between the industry and the labour in an integrated manner.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think all have put question.

RE ALLEGED ASSAULT ON A LADY MEMBER OF THE BIHAR LEGIS-LATIVE ASSEMBLY

श्री रेवती कान्त सिंह (बिहार): माननीया, आप जानती हैं कि बिहार राष्ट्रपति शासन के अधीन है। इसलिये मैं बिहार के एक बहत ही महत्वपूर्ण मामले को ओर गृह मंत्री का घ्यान खींचना चाहता हं । पिछली 31 जुलाई, 1969 को गया जिले के बाराचट्टी क्षेत्र को हरिजन विद्यायिका श्रीमतो भगवती देवी जी० टी० रोड पर भदेया नामक जगह पर एक चाय की द्कान में चाय पी रही थीं, तभी वहां पर करीब 40 य। 50 व्यक्ति आये लाठी भालों के साथ और उन्होंने बिना किसी प्रोवोकेशन के उन पर आक्रमण कर दिया और ऐसा प्राणघातक आक्र-मण किया कि दूसरे लोग जो उस सड़क से जा रहे थे उन लोगों ने बीचबचाव करके उन्हें बचाया । उसके बाद वे गई बाराचट्टी थाने में और वहां उन्होंने लिखित रिपोर्ट दर्ज कराई जिसमें उन्होंने कुछ लोगों के नाम भी दिये हैं। लेकिन आज तक बाराचट्टी थाने की पुलिस ने कोई कार्यवाही नहीं की है। उन्होंने गया सुदर के एस०डी०ओ० से भी मुलाकात की और उनसे भी लिखित कंप्लेंट की, लेकिन अभी तक कोई कार्यवाही नहीं हुई है । पहली अगस्त को गया ज़िले की संयुक्त सोशालिस्ट पार्टी के अध्यक्ष प्रोफेसर राम प्यारे सिंह बाराचट्टी थाने पर गये और उन्होंने वहां के थानेदार से भेंट की और याने दार ने कहा कि लिखित कंप्लेंट में उन्होंने जो कुछ भी कहा है वह सब सही है, लेकिन अभी तक हम कुछ कर नहीं पाये हैं। माननीया, इसका एकमात्र कारण यह है कि उन्होंने जिन लोगों के नाम दिये हैं वे उस इलाके के बहत बड़े लोग